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Moody on The Market

Pat Moody

St. Joseph Commissioners indicate conditional support for proposed development downtown

It's very early in the game, but a South Bend developer is stepping forward with a concept that might lead to development of the former YWCA property along Lake Boulevard in downtown St. Joseph. The spot that many refer to simply as 'The Empty Lot" has sat undeveloped for years after several commercial/residential combo plans failed to attract financing that would make them economically feasible. Even during a period of historically low interest rates, nothing happened, and with rates up recently, there's been little hope of anything happening soon on the site. That MIGHT be changing!

Now, the property, which is owned by the locally based Monte family, is being eyed for a new commercial-residential combo project being envisioned by a South Bend developer, The Rienks Group. Rienks proposes to combine the YWCA lot with the city-owned parking lot to its South, to make a project that's big enough to make the numbers work. Very tentatively, the several story building would have commercial space on the street level, apartments or condo's above, and an underground parking garage that would not result in any parking spaces being lost.

City commissioners on Monday heard from Peter Rienks of the Rienks Group, which has expressed an interest in purchasing a city-owned lot at the corner of Lake Boulevard and Broad Street. The project would involve the privately-owned former YWCA lot at 508 Pleasant Street and the city's adjacent parking lot. Rienks told commissioners what his firm has in mind would be transformational for the city.

"The project would include 32 high-end condominiums, 68 market-rate apartments, over 12,000 square feet of commercial space, a modern event venue, and 157 underground parking spaces," Reinks said.

Those 157 parking spaces would mean no spaces would be lost downtown, something stressed by City Manager Emily Hackworth.

Reinks said the residential units would be for full-time residents, and of the market rate units, he estimated the rents would be around $1,300 to $2,000 per month. They would have to be close to the community's median income because he plans to pursue some state housing

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Paul Knapp

Executive Director,
St. Joseph Today

Waves of Brilliance: The Lake Bluff Stairway Blooms Again

Here at St. Joe Today, we believe that a vibrant community isn't just about bustling businesses and beautiful beaches; it's also about enriching the soul through art. We've long been committed to fostering a thriving arts scene right in Southwest Michigan and nowhere is that commitment more colorfully evident than on the lake bluff stairway. As you descend towards the beautiful waters of Lake Michigan, you're not just taking steps; you're stepping into a masterpiece.

This year, we are absolutely thrilled to welcome back the incredibly talented Kim Wood for her second year as our featured artist on the stairway mural. Kim's unique

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